

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 7 and 12 as follows. The claims, as pending in the subject application, read as follows:

1. (Previously Presented) A remote managing system for managing plural image forming apparatuses and plural types of maintenance agreements relating to the image forming apparatuses, comprising:

a receiver that receives information of a number of printed paper sheets output by an image forming apparatus, together with an identifier of the image forming apparatus, via a communication path;

a memory that stores a variety of unit prices per paper sheet to be output by each of the image forming apparatuses, wherein each of the variety of unit prices is associated with an identifier of an image forming apparatuses and a type of maintenance agreement for the image forming apparatus; and

a calculation section that calculates a payable amount for an image forming apparatus having the identifier on the basis of (i) the number of printed paper sheets received by said receiver, associated with the identifier and (ii) a unit price of the variety of unit prices, stored in said memory, associated with the identifier and the type of maintenance agreement for the image forming apparatus.

2. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 1, wherein said memory stores a first unit price per printed sheet in correspondence with an agreement of a

first type and a second unit price per printed sheet in correspondence with an agreement of a second type,

wherein the contents of services under each of the agreements of the first type and the second type differ from each other, and

wherein the amount of the second unit price is an additional amount of the first unit price and a predetermined amount.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 1, further comprising an input section that inputs an instruction for instructing an agreement sent from an external computer, input through an agreement instruction window displayed by the external computer,

wherein said calculation section calculates the payable amount based upon (i) a unit price per printed sheet in accordance with the agreement instructed by the instruction input by said input section and (ii) the number of printed sheets received by said receiver.

5. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 4, further comprising a retrieval section for retrieving agreement information of a suitable agreement based upon running information, based on the information of the number of paper sheets, of the image forming apparatuses, and

an information section that informs a user of a result of retrieval by said retrieval section.

6. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 1, further comprising a an input section that inputs an instruction sent by an external computer for instructing (i) a type of agreement and (ii) a period of the type of agreement input through an agreement instruction window displayed by the external computer,

wherein said calculation section calculates the payable amount in the instructed period input by said input section based upon (i) a unit price per printed sheet in accordance with the type of agreement in the instructed period and (ii) the number of printed sheets is a number of sheets printed during the instructed period.

7. (Currently Amended) A remote managing method of calculating a charge for use of each of a plurality of image forming apparatuses by a user, comprising the steps of:

receiving information of a number of printed paper sheets output by an image forming apparatus, together with an identifier of the image forming apparatus, via a communication path;

storing a variety of unit prices per paper sheet to be output by each of the image forming apparatuses, wherein each of the variety of unit prices is associated with an identifier of an image forming apparatus and a type of maintenance agreement for the image forming apparatus; and

calculating a payable amount for use of an image forming apparatus having the identifier on the basis of (i) the number of printed paper sheets, received by said receiver in said receiving step, associated with the identifier and (ii) a unit price of the variety of unit prices, stored in said memory storing step, associated with the identifier and the type of maintenance agreement for the image forming apparatus.

8. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 7, wherein said storing step stores a first unit price per printed sheet in correspondence with an agreement of a first type and a second unit price per printed sheet in accordance with an agreement of a second type,

wherein the contents of services under each of the agreements of the first type and the second type differ from each other, and

wherein the amount of the second unit price is an additional amount of the first unit price and a predetermined amount.

9. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 7, further comprising an inputting step of inputting an instruction for instructing an agreement sent from an external computer, input through agreement instruction window displayed by the external computer,

wherein said calculating step calculates the payable amount based upon (i) a unit price per printed sheet in accordance with the agreement instructed by the instruction input in said inputting step and (ii) the number of printed sheets received in said receiving step.

10. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, further comprising:

a retrieving step of retrieving agreement information of a suitable agreement based upon running information, based on the information of the number of paper sheets, of the image forming apparatuses; and

an informing step of informing a user of a result of retrieval by said retrieval step.

11. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 7, further comprising an inputting step for inputting an instruction sent by an external computer for instructing (i) a type of agreement and (ii) a period of the type of agreement input through an agreement instruction window displayed by the external computer,

wherein said calculating step calculates the payable amount in the instructed period input by said input step based upon (i) a unit price per printed sheet in accordance with the agreement in the instructed period and (ii) the number of printed sheets is a number of sheets printed during the instructed period.

12. (Currently Amended) A computer program stored on a computer-readable medium for a remote managing method for calculating a charge for use of each of a plurality of image forming apparatuses by a user, comprising codes for the steps of:

receiving information of a number of printed paper sheets output by an image forming apparatus, together with an identifier of the image forming apparatus, via a communication path;

storing a variety of unit prices per paper sheet to be output by each of the image forming apparatuses, wherein each of the variety of unit prices is associated with an identifier of an image forming apparatus and a type of maintenance agreement for the image forming apparatus; and

calculating as payable amount for use of an image forming apparatus having the identifier on the basis of (i) the number of printed paper sheets, received ~~by said receiver in said receiving step~~, associated with the identifier and (ii) a unit price of the variety of unit prices, stored in said ~~memory storing step~~, associated with the identifier and the type of maintenance agreement for the image forming apparatus.

13. (Previously Presented) The program according to claim 12, wherein said storing step stores a first unit price per printed sheet in correspondence with an agreement of a first type and a second unit price per printed sheet in correspondence with an agreement of a second type,

wherein the contents of services under each of the agreements of the first type and the second type differ from each other, and

wherein the amount of the second unit price is an additional amount of the first unit price and a predetermined amount.

14. (Previously Presented) The program according to claim 12, further comprising a step of inputting an instruction for instructing an agreement sent from an external computer, input through an agreement instruction window displayed by the external computer,

wherein said calculating step calculates the payable amount based upon (i) a unit price per printed sheet in accordance with the agreement instructed by the instruction input in said inputting step and (ii) the number of printed sheets received in said receiving step.

15. (Previously Presented) The program according to claim 12, further comprising:

a step of retrieving agreement information of a suitable agreement based upon running information of the image forming apparatuses based on the information of the number of paper sheets; and

a step of informing a user of a result of retrieval by said retrieval step.

16. (Previously Presented) The program according to claim 12, further comprising an inputting step for inputting an instruction sent by an external computer for instructing (i) a type of agreement and (ii) a period of the type of agreement input through an agreement instruction window displayed by the external computer,

wherein said calculating step calculates the payable amount in the instructed period input in said input step based upon (i) a unit price per printed sheet in accordance with the agreement in the instructed period and (ii) the number of printed sheets is the number of sheets printed during the instructed period.

17. to 43. (Canceled)